



GRACE COVENANT

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship December 28, 2025 9:30am
First Sunday of Christmas

Gathering

*The prelude, the first act of worship, sets the tone for what is to follow.
So, we invite you as worshipers to gather, to transition from your busy lives
into a sacred place of communion with God and with each other. – Dr. Kimo Smith, adapted*

SONGS TO GATHER

“Angels We have Heard on High”

#113 (vs 1)

“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”

#119 (vs 1)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Karen Wright

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Praise God from the heavens!

ALL: Praise Him from the skies above!

One: Praise God, angels and all the hosts of heaven!

ALL: Praise Him, sun and moon, and shining stars!

One: Praise God, all creatures great and small,

ALL: Praise Him, animals and birds, reptiles and fish!

One: Praise God, kings of the earth and people everywhere,

ALL: Praise Him, men and women, young and old!

One: Let all the earth bring praise to the Lord, at whose word creation came into being.

ALL: We gather to praise and worship our God!

*SONGS OF PRAISE

“Away in a Manger”

#114 (vs 1)

“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

#123 (vs 1)

CALL TO CONFESSION

In these days after Christmas, when the angels’ song fades and the world returns to its familiar rhythms, we remember that Christ did not come only for a holy night — but for every ordinary day that follows. Yet we confess how quickly we forget the wonder of God-with-us. We lose sight of the light that has dawned. So let us come before the God who enters our everyday lives with mercy and renewal. Let us confess our sin together.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of Light and Life, we confess that we welcome your Son with joy, yet struggle to follow him with faithfulness. We celebrate his birth, but we cling to old habits, old fears, and old divisions. We hear your promise of peace, but we let worry rule our days and let weariness dim our hope. Forgive us, Lord. By your Spirit, keep the light of Christ burning in us — that the love we sing at Christmas may guide our steps in the week ahead and shape our lives long after the decorations are packed away. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Hear the good news: The Word became flesh and lived among us — full of grace and truth. This grace is not for a moment, but for every moment. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, set free to walk in the light and live as children of God.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

(Awakening to Worship, our child-friendly worship time meets again on January 4. Today, our Nursery welcomes young children and our ushers can assist families to the nursery located in the children’s wing. Worship bags are available for children who stay in worship.)

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you and all others!

SUNG RESPONSE

“He Came Down”

#137

Equipping

SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 53:7–9

SONG TO REFLECT “Ukrainian Bell Carol” (*Carol of the Bells*) by M. Leontovych
arr. Cal Sweeten, hammered dulcimer

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 2:22–40
Song “What Child Is This”
(vs 1)

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 2:41–52
Song “What Child Is This”
(vs 2)

SCRIPTURE LESSON John 1:1–18
Song “What Child Is This”
(vs 3)

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words
Thanks be to God!

SERMON “A Conversation for the Season” Rev. Karen Wright

SONG OF PEACE “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”
#132

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (unison) *from A Brief Statement of Faith*

In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and in the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve. We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God; preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and

forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

A CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

OFFERING OF GIFTS AND MUSIC “Be Born in Me” by Nicole Nordeman
Carrie DeVries, soloist

*Everything inside me cries for order~ Everything inside me wants to hide
Is this shadow an angel or a warrior? If God is pleased with me, why am I so terrified?
Someone tell me I am only dreaming~ Somehow help me see with Heaven's eyes
And before my head agrees my heart is on its knees~ Holy is He ~Blessed am I*

*Be born in me~ Be born in me
Trembling heart, somehow I believe that You chose me.
I'll hold You in the beginning, You will hold me in the end.
Every moment in the middle, make my heart Your Bethlehem.
Be born in me*

*All this time we've waited for the promise~All this time You've waited for my arms
Did You wrap Yourself inside the unexpected
so we might know that love would go that far?
I am not brave I'll never be the only thing my heart can offer is a vacancy.
I'm just a girl~ nothing more~ but I am willing~ I am Yours*

Sending

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Rev. Karen Wright

SONG TO SEND

“Go, Tell It On the Mountain”

#136

**Stand in body or spirit*

GOD’S PEACE TO YOU

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